GRADUATION PROHIBITED

OHSAWA YAYOI

SLIDE
SO, FOR THE NEXT PROBLEM...
GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE!
I'M AFRAID THE DYE JOBS KEPT US A LITTLE LATE.
Nothing could beat the atmosphere in there.
The classroom froze.

OH..?
SHOULD'VE GOTTEN IT ON FILM!
Ah ha ha ha..!
AMAZ-ING!
OLD SANO STANDING THERE WITH HIS MOUTH HANGING OPEN!
FWUMP
DID YOU SEE HIS FACE!?
PARDON THE INTRU-SION!
CAN YOU REALLY GO TO SCHOOL LIKE THAT?
NO PROBLEM NO PROBLEM!
GRADUATION PHOTOS ARE COMING UP!
Even you, Reika-chan!
RU!! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO YOUR HAIR!?
AHHH...
WE REALLY DID IT
HOO!

My friend Reika here is, just as you see, a smoking-hot cutie.
Mirror mirror
beam♡
HEY, MY HEART WAS BEATING SO FAST!
In senior year, we wound up in the same class for the first time.
There was a mysterious air about her that drew me in. So I befriended her.
That brown hair looks so good on her
She just has something that makes you want to be near her.

I MEAN, YOU EVEN GOT YELLED AT BECAUSE OF ME
you know?
I KINDA DRAGGED YOU INTO THIS ON MY OWN WHIM
BUT WAS IT REALLY ALL RIGHT TO DYE IT?
Oh, really?
Nothing to do with me, huh
IT'S TOTALLY OKAY!
beam
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT'S NO PROBLEM! I ALWAYS WANTED TO TRY GIVING MYSELF BROWN HAIR! NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU, RUI!
Not a care in the world...
EACE
IT LOOKS AMAZING
stroke
WE MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE GOING WITH BLONDE FOR YOU
Reika... probably doesn't really get it.

YEP, SEE YOU! BYE-BYE!
Be careful!
WELP, BYE THEN! SEE YOU TOMORROW!
She doesn't understand the real reason I dyed my hair.
I just wanted there to be...
VOOOOOO
It's not that I wanted to stand out.
Or that I particularly wanted to be a blonde.
CLICK
That's what was going through my head.
one thing me and Reika, and nobody else in the school,
shared together, special.

Are we just going to graduate
without me getting any of it across?
OKAY!
I'm sure she...
hasn't the slightest idea about any of this.
I'M GOING TO GO BUY SOME JUICE.
WHAT!? NO WAY!
TURN
drip
drip
It doesn't work.
drip
Drip?
...I try to tell myself, but
Maybe that's for the best
Brrr chilly
BURST
BAD NEWS, REIKA! IT STARTED RAINING!
YOU DON'T HAVE ONE OF THOSE LITTLE UMBRELLAS ON YOU OR...
ANY...

Ugh, she really is!
zzz
vssshhhh
REIKA... YOU ASLEEP?
whisper
Whoa what is this? Adorable!!
she'll never notice how I feel.
If things stay like this,
Everything about her is so carefree... and elusive somehow.
except for fun things.
She doesn't have a thought in her head,
VSSSHHHH
the color I like the most
I don't think...
.....
Am I okay with things staying like this?
The hair I dyed...

Vssssssh
I'm okay with it at all...
So soft...
Leap
!!!
HOO... SORRY, I FELL ASLEEP
yawnnn

LET'S GO HOME.
Why isn't she saying anything? She had to have noticed, right?
But wait... maybe she didn't?
Or maybe this is her way of telling me to forget about it?
MM? YEAH.
GETTING WET WALKING HOME IN THE RAIN...

But... I know how I feel.
Right now, we can still probably...
pretend it never happened.
SO WHAT'D YOU THINK?
beam
HUH?
HEY
grip
She's so pretty
AH.
JUST... WONDERING WHAT YOUR OPINION WAS
EH? MY OPINION?
ABOUT WHAT?
Y'KNOW, ABOUT THE... KISS BACK THERE.

I MEAN... WE BOTH KNOW WHAT IT MEANS WHEN SOMEBODY KISSES YOU, RIGHT?
ba-dum
ba-dum
YOU DON'T SPEAK YOUR MIND ALL THAT MUCH, REIKA, SO...
IF YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT, I WAS HOPING YOU'D SAY SO
?
WHY?
I MEAN... I FEEL THE SAME WAY
WELL, LIKE... REQUITED LOVE, RIGHT?
To put it one way
YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY... MEANING, WHAT EXACTLY?
She feels the same way...?

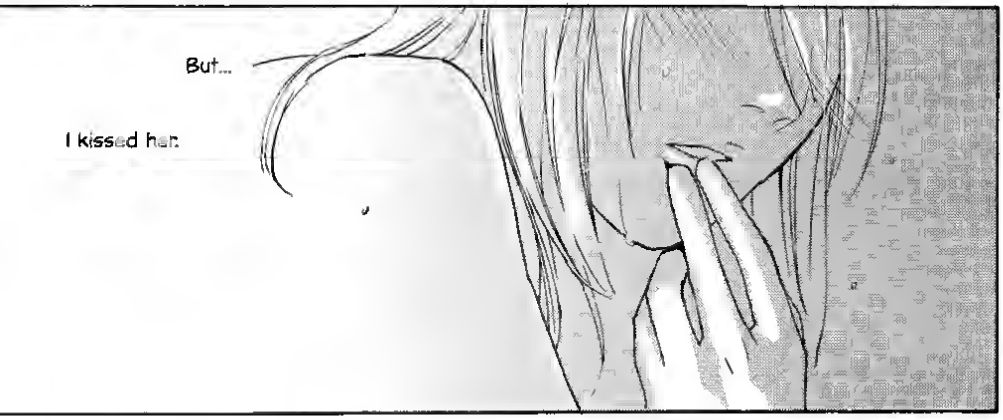
YOU MEAN IT?
I DON'T... KNOW WHAT TO DO. I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS...
YOU MEAN IT? YOU REALLY REALLY MEAN IT?
YEP.
I THINK I DO

Reika... really thought of me that way...
BUT... BUT I MEAN...
Ah ha ha
WHY ARE YOU DOUBTING ME SO MUCH?
EH? NO WAY... FOR REAL? IF YOU'RE LYING TO ME, I'M GONNA GET SO MAD.
Really?
Really?
It's like a dream...
REIKA...
!
bit...
...
SNUGGLE
REIKA, I LOVE YOU SO MUCH!

Ah ha ha!
RUI, YOU PERV!
NO... UM... I JUST WANTED TO TRY IT...
Did it without
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
who knew happiness like this could exist?
Ahh...
Hahhhh
die right now, and it'd be okay by me.
I could just...
I'M HOME
drip drip
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING!? GET THOSE SOPPING WET CLOTHES OFF YOURSELF IMMEDIATELY!!!

Does this mean, starting today...
Reika and I are lovers?
splash
WHAT A DAY! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY!!
BEST EVER!!
...
Wait.
Hold on.
Doesn't have a bad ring to it
Heh heh heh
Lovers lovers, huh
She didn't think I meant... "You're a friend I love so much, I want to kiss you"... right?
She didn't mean the same as that, did she!?
THUMBS UP
...That's what she said, but... the same as what exactly?
"I FEEL THE SAME WAY!"

She never said, "I like you romantically."
Sighhh...
AWWW MAN... AND I GATHERED UP ALL THAT COURAGE...
But no... it's true Reika never said it herself.
Eh? No way, right?
That's a little far-fetched...



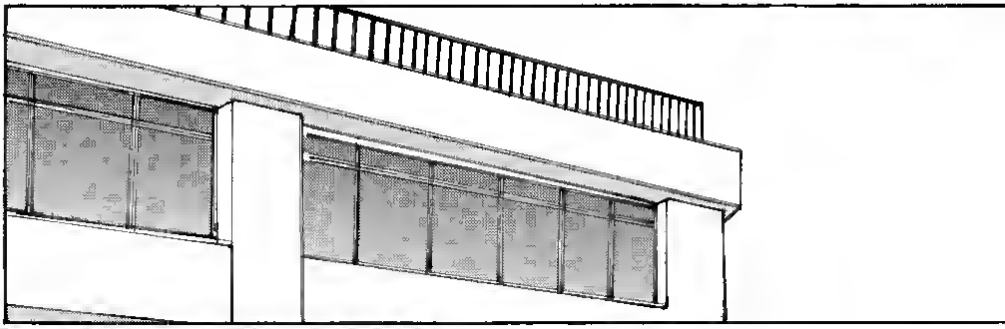
But what I do know for sure is, we have a special love for each other that we don't share with anyone else.

I can't tell for sure right now.

It might be that the only thing between us is friendship.

But there might be romantic feelings, too.

GOOD MORNING!
We're special to each other.
GOOD MORNING.
That's right... we...
love one another.
What a waste it would be...
not to enjoy the time we have left till graduation!



I don't know whether she sensed this feeling of mine or not, but...

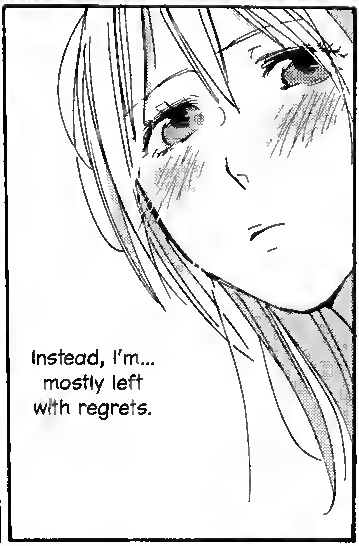
there certainly seemed to be
RUI.
In the days we spent together until graduation...
a different, special sort of time passing
just for the two of us.

SAY CHEESE!
click
And just like that,
BLONDIE AND BROWNIE!
Hey!
Hey!
Oh, hey
OOH, THERE YOU ARE!
THANKS.
I'LL SEND IT TO YOU LATER.
the two of us graduated.
Well, I won't deny that
It looks good on us, right?
WE MANAGED TO GRADUATE, SO IT WORKED OUT
WHAT'S DONE IS DONE!
Ah, stuff it.
YOU WERE PISSING THE TEACHERS OFF TO THE VERY END,
with those heads of yours.

Those two, off on their own.
I thought there might be some progress in our relationship by now.
Grrr...
HEY, HEY, REIKA-CHAN! LET'S TAKE A PICTURE.
HMM? SURE.

Wishing I could call her my "lover," loud and proud.

Wishing we could have gone out on more dates in our school uniforms.
Wishing I'd made some kind of move earlier.


Instead, I'm... mostly left with regrets.

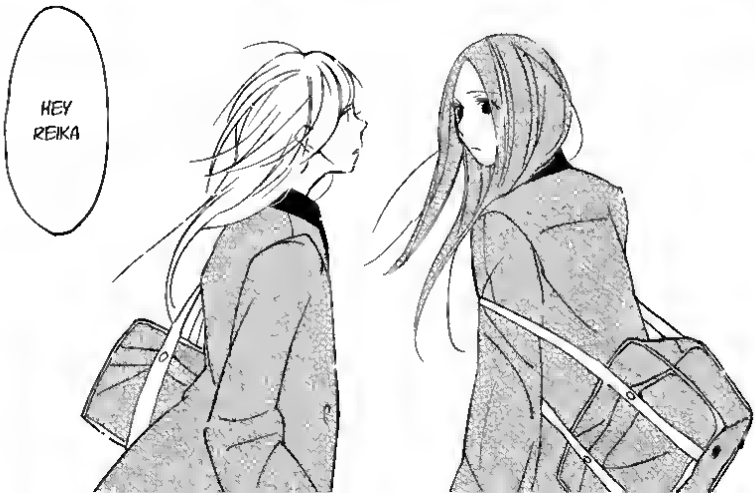
AWW LUCKY YOU GET US TOO!

EH HEH HEH! SELFIE WITH REIKA-CHAN!!
Maybe then, I wouldn't have to feel jealous like this.

This doesn't feel like our sorrowful parting.
I think that there's something special between us.
Smile, Rui!
TWITCH
Too close!
But I still...
Together, she and I...
CLENCH
SURE!
yes!
Run, your face is really scary...
Ugh...
Even if we won't be able to see each other every day like we used to.
After all, this isn't the end for us.
SAY, REIKA-CHAN.
I may not know exactly what the future holds, but...
CAN WE EXCHANGE NECKTIES?

WHAT!!?
And... right in front af me.
To her, not me!?
Why are you giving away...
such an important token?
Why...

Well see you there!
NAH, COUNT ME OUT
WE'RE ALL GOING TO GO TAKE COMMEMORATIVE PHOTOS AT THE MALL.
YOU'LL COME TOO, RIGHT?
THANKS FOR WAITING.


HEY REIKA

CAN I SEE YOU TONIGHT?
I HAVE A LOT OF THINGS I WANT TO TALK ABOUT.
RUI
WERE YOU WAITING LONG?
YEAH, A BIT.

Mmm...?
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE CALLED YOU OUT HERE, THEN.
Hmph
NO
I'm soooo worn-out...
I'M SORRY IT GOT SO LATE. WE WENT TO KARAOKE AFTER THAT...
I'D BETTER BE GETTING HOME SOON TOO
YEAH
She'll look at me like that, so lovingly.
STROKE
I WANTED TO HURRY UP AND SEE YOU.
that leaves me with no idea what's going on.
JUST WHAT... ARE YOU AND I?
Yet the next moment, treat me so coldly.
HEY. LISTEN.

WHAT AM I TO YOU, REIKA?
?
Mmm..
THAT'S HOW YOU ALWAYS ARE.
...?
MM? WELL... HMM...
ARE YOU, REIKA?
YOU'RE NEVER THINKING ABOUT ANYTHING,

THIS!
SOMETHING LIKE WHAT?
THAT'S... HOW COULD YOU DO... SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN FRONT OF ME!
I'M THE ONLY ONE AGONIZING OVER THIS STUFF I FEEL LIKE AN IDIOT
I QUIT I'M DONE I DON'T GET YOU, REIKA
Her necktie
YES?
HEY... REIKA
YOU SAID YOU FELT THE SAME WAY I DID. DIDN'T YOU?
PLEASE DON'T CRY
WHAT'S WRONG, RUI?

I WANT YOU, REIKA.
EVERYTHING OF YOURS, I WANT TO BE MINE
YOU'RE SPECIAL TO ME
THAT'S WHAT I MEAN WHEN I SAY I LOVE YOU
DO YOU GET ME? DO YOU UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL?
CAN YOU ACCEPT THAT AND BE WITH ME?
YES, I DO UNDERSTAND
AND I FEEL THE SAME WAY
LIAR!
I MEAN IT HERE, RUI, LOOK THIS WAY

TAKE IT
THAT'S RIGHT
IT'S... A KEY?
THE KEY TO MY PLACE ♥
STARTING THIS SPRING, I'M LIVING ON MY OWN
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO GIVING YOU THAT FOR SO LONG
IT'S A KEY YOU AND I HAVE, AND NOBODY ELSE, RUI

HUH?
HA...
BECAUSE I ALWAYS WANT YOU TO BE THE CLOSEST PERSON TO ME IN THE WORLD
TELL ME THAT STUFF SOONER
clench
YOU NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT LIVING ON YOUR OWN...
WHAT... THE HELL...
YEAH PRETTY HAPPY
DID IT WORK? ARE YOU HAPPY?
WELL, I WANTED TO SURPRISE YOU

OH, BUT YOU WANTED MY NECKTIE, RUI?
MAYBE I SHOULD'VE GIVEN YOU THAT INSTEAD
NO, FORGET ABOUT THAT
SNIFF
THIS IS BETTER
THIS IS WHAT I WANT
I love you.
Thank you.
fin.

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